

Message Text

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44

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 DOTE-00 SS-20 NSC-10 L-03

H-03 DRC-01 /085 W

----- 121985

P R 211400Z FEB 74

FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 196

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE RIO DE JANEIRO 0642

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, BR

SUBJ: CIVAIR: INTRODUCTION OF WIDE BODY JETS

REF: A) RIO 295 B) RIO 243

SUMMARY: RECENT CONVERSATIONS INDICATE BRAZILIAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITIES ARE FIRMLY OPPOSED TO WIDE BODY JET OPERATIONS IN BRAZIL PRIOR TO JULY 1ST. THEY CONSIDER CURRENT AIRPORT FACILITIES COMPLETELY INADEQUATE. SEVERAL AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS BEING UNDERTAKEN TO FACILITATE SUCH WIDE BODY JET OPERATIONS AFTER JULY 1ST.

1. LOCAL PANAM REP JOSEPH PROENZA AND CONGEN OFF MET WITH CERNAI PRESIDENT BRIGADIER EDIVIO CALDAS SANTOS ON FRIDAY, FEB 15, TO DISCUSS REF SUBJECT. CALDAS STATED FIRMLY GOB'S INTENTION AUTHORIZE WIDE BODY JET OPERATIONS ONLY AFTER JULY 1ST. HE INSISTED AIRPORTS

TOTALLY INADEQUATE TO HANDLE SUCH OPERATIONS ANY EARLIER. DURING PRESENT RUSH PERIODS AT GALEAO, FOR EXAMPLE, AIRCRAFT FREQUENTLY WAIT FROM 30 TO 60 MINUTES FOR PARKING SPACE AND PASSENGERS REQUIRE UP TO AN HOUR AND A HALF TO COMPLETE DISEMBARKATION PROCEDURES. HE IMPLIED GOB PERMITTING INTRODUCTION WIDE BODY JETS IN JULY ONLY BECAUSE VARIG SHOULD BE OPERATING ITS DC-10S BY THEN, AND NEED FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECIPROCITY EVIDENT. CLEARLY, GOB WOULD PREFER HAVE NO WIDE BODY

JET OPERATIONS IN BRAZIL UNTIL NEW GALEAO TERMINAL COMPLETED.
AUTHORIZATION HAD INITIALLY BEEN GRANTED VARIG TO PURCHASE DC-10S
ON ASSUMPTION NEW TERMINAL WOULD BE COMPLETED BY JUN 74.
PRESENTLY APPEARS TERMINAL CANNOT BE FINISHED UNTIL END OF 74.

2. GOB UNDERTAKING SEVERAL IMPROVEMENTS WHICH HOPEFULLY WILL BE
COMPLETED AT GALEAO BY JULY 1ST AND THUS EASE INTRODUCTION OF WIDE
BODY JETS. THESE IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE ENLARGEMENT OF PARKING AREA
AND PASSENGER EMBARKATION ROOM, TRAINING OF NEW IMMIGRATION AND
CUSTOMS PERSONNEL, AND RESTRUCTURING OF PRESENT DISEMBARKATION PRO-
CEDURES. IN ADDITION, CERNAI CONSIDERINRBQOSSIBILITY OF EMBARKING/
DISEMBARKING SOME DOMESTIC FLIGHTS ON APRON OF NEW TERMINAL BUILDING,
USING BUSES TO TRANSPORT PASSENGERS BETWEEN THAT APRON AND PRESENT
TERMINAL. THIS ARRANGEMENT DEPENDS PARTIALLY UPON CONSTRUCTION OF
TEMPORARY ACCESS ROAD FROM OLD TO NEW TERMINAL BUILDING. EVEN WITH
THESE IMPROVEMENTS, PROTUGUESE AIRLINE (TAP) WILL BE HELD TO ONE
747 FREQUENCY PER WEEK AND AIRFRANCE TO TWO FREQUENCIES PER WEEK.
IBERIA AND SWISSAIR WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO INTRODUCE THEIR WIDE
BODY JETS UNTIL NOVEMBER.

3. IN VIEW PANAM NEWYORK SUGGESTION THAT WIDE BODY JETS LAND AT
SAOPAULO VIRACOPOS AIRPORT WHILE GALEAO UNAVAILABLE, LOCAL PANAM
REP AND CONGEN OFFICER TRAVELLED TO SAOPAULO SPECIFICALLY TO REVIEW
SITUATION. CONCLUSION IS THAT VIRACOPOS NOT SUITABLE FOR WIDE BODY
JETS AT THIS TIME. CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY TO EXPAND PARKING APRON,
IMPORVE BAGGAGE HANDLING, AND ENLARGE PASSENGER BOARDING AREA AND
MINUSCULE CUSTOMS FACILITIES. THESE IMPROVEMENTS, HOWEVER, UNLIKELY
TO BE COMPLETED UNTIL LATE THIS YEAR. DESPITE THIS SITUATION, PANAM
OPERATIONS PERSONNEL AT VIRACOPOS APPARENTLY WILLING TO RECOMMEND
EARLY INTRODUCTION OF WIDE BODY JETS. THEIR RECOMMENDATION, NEVER-
THELESS, SEEMS TO ORIGINATE MORE FROM NEWYORK OFFICE PRESSURES THAN
FROM CONVICTION VIRACOPOS CAN HANDLE 747 SATISFACTORILY. THEY
ALSO APPEAR TO BELIEVE THEIR OPERATIONS WILL CONTINUE EMBARKING/
DISEMBARKING 40 TO 50 PASSENGERS PER FLIGHT. IF 747 TRAVELS ONLY TO
VIRACOPOS, SUCH A LOW FIGURE CERTAINLY SEEMS UNLIKELY. LOCAL PANAM
OFFICE WOULD UNDOUBTEDELY BE PRESSED TO BOOST PASSENGER LOADS
SUFFICIENTLY TO COMPENSATE FOR LACK E SERVICE TO RIO. IN OTHER
WORDS, PANAM COULD HARDLY AFFORD TO FLY 747 TO BRAZIL MERELY TO EMBARK/

DISEMBARK 40 OR 50 PASSENGERS.
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4. USG AND PANAM COULD PRESUMABLY INSIST THAT GOB LIVE UP TO TERMS
OF BILATERAL REQUIRING ONLY SIX MONTHS PRIOR NOTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
IN GAUGE. SUCH AN ATTITUDE, HOWEVER, WOULD CERTAINLY RAISE DOUBTS
ABOUT DESIRABILITY OF U.S.-BRAZIL BILATERAL AMONG GOB OFFICIALS, MANY
OF WHOM WOULD PREFER A EUROPEAN TYPE AGREEMENT. SUCH AN ATTITUDE
COULD ALSO UNDERMINE LOCAL PANAM REP'S EXCELLENT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE
COMPANY'S IMAGE WITHIN AVIATION CIRCLES. THIS LATTER POINT MAY BE

CRUCIAL BECAUSE 747 OPERATIONS, EVEN AFTER JULY 1ST, WILL REQUIRE
SIGNIFIC
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL AVIATION, JET AIRCRAFT, AIR FACILITIES, FLIGHT CLEARANCES, AIRPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974RIODE00642
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: RIO DE JANEIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740218/aaaaaqsu.tel
Line Count: 112
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) RIO 295 B) RIO 243
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 08 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUL 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <09 JUL 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CIVAIR: INTRODUCTION OF WIDE BODY JETS
TAGS: ETRN, BR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005